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HSUS Veal Campaign Takes Off

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OF THE UNITED STATES **The Humane Society** CLOSE-UP REPORT

HSUS Veal Campaign Takes Off

Milk-fed calves the focus of national public-education campaign

We hope, by now, that many of you have seen The HSUS's ads in newspapers and magazines asking consumers to think twice before ordering veal when dining out. Our half-page ad in the *New York Times* in December kicked off what we believe to be the biggest campaign—ever—to help farm animals.

The focus of our campaign is milk-fed, or white, veal. Of all the confinement-raised animals, the veal calf endures probably the most restrictive conditions for the least justifiable reasons.

The *New York Times* ad was only the beginning of a carefully planned and coordinated campaign to increase the public's awareness of the veal calf's plight. Our goals: to make sure the public is aware of how its food animals are being produced, and the veal industry aware of the extent to which the public values humaneness in animal production. Our means: to enlist the aid of magazine ads in major veal-consuming cities, hundreds of local humane societies throughout the country, and you, our members, to help spread the word.

Through our action packet, which includes a fact sheet describing how veal calves are raised in this country, an action sheet showing what you can do to help, and bright yellow cards to leave when you dine out explaining why you didn't choose veal, you can help get the word out.

It is clear that our efforts to reform milk-fed veal production methods in the U.S. are already producing results. Shortly after our *New York*



Dear Restaurateur,
I enjoyed my meal here, but I did not choose a veal entree because I believe milk-fed veal is inhumanely raised. I would prefer it if you did not offer this veal on your menu.
The HSUS would be happy to send you more information: The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Times ad appeared, a large farm group paid to have its own ad published in response. Agricultural trade papers have warned their readers against our campaign. And Provimi, Inc., one of the nation's largest veal producers, has called on the farm community to boycott The HSUS and has pledged some \$200,000 to fight us and our ex-

pert, Dr. Michael Fox. Yet the U.S. Department of Agriculture has recently announced grants of more than a quarter million dollars to study the effects of stress in farm animals. And, on Capitol Hill, a bill has been introduced to establish a special study commission to look into the problem. The campaign is working.



Milk-fed veal ends up in the most elegant of surroundings, but it begins like this, with a calf in a stall so small it cannot even turn around. The veal calf's miserable existence is only one example of the growing numbers of inhumane husbandry practices that have come to be known as factory farming.

Calves destined to become milk-fed veal begin their lives as every other calf does. Nearly always the male offspring of a dairy cow, useless for milk production, a calf doomed to become white veal is taken from its mother three or four days after birth, bidding farewell to the out-of-doors until the day, some 16 weeks later, when it will be taken to slaughter. Some one million of these calves—one third of all calves raised for veal in this country—are raised in confinement for white veal every year.

The standard home for a confinement-raised calf is a bare wooden crate, two feet wide by five feet long. The sides and bottom of the crate are slats of wood. No bedding is used because the calves, naturally craving roughage, would be likely to chew on it. To keep the meat fashionably—and expensively—white, they must be denied roughage. To discourage the calves from moving around and turning flesh to muscle, producers used to keep their animals in total or semi-darkness up to 22 hours a day. However, prompted in part by animal welfare complaints, most of the large companies no longer encourage this practice.

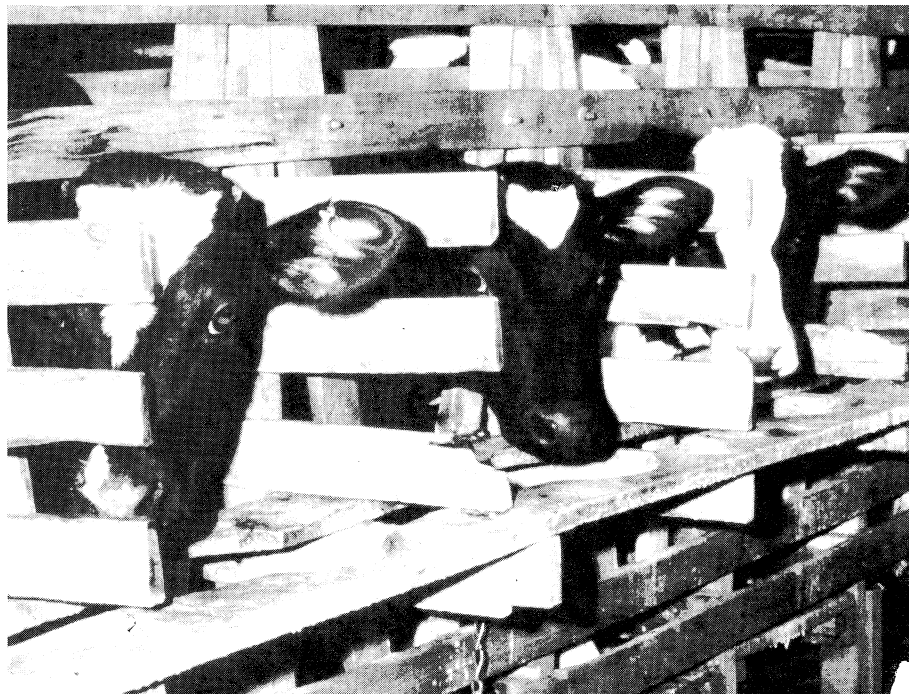
A calf's digestive system is designed for small amounts of food ingested through sucking at frequent intervals throughout the day. In confinement systems, however, calves are fed only

twice a day and must drink from a bucket. Their milk replacer diet is purposely deficient in iron, also to produce a flesh as pale as possible. It is ironic that "white" flesh is still regarded so highly, since taste tests confirm what producers have privately admitted for years: flesh color has little or no effect on taste.

Do You Know What You're Eating?

Unlike bob veal, produced from calves slaughtered shortly after birth, or grass-fed veal, from calves that develop pinker meat, milk-fed veal is produced by a system that subjects the animals to significant stress. This husbandry method denies the animals the ability to follow their most basic instincts; coupled with the borderline anemia sometimes induced by the diet, it also makes them highly susceptible to disease. To combat this threat, a number of drugs—frequently human antibiotics such as tetracycline—are added to the milk-replacers.

This regimen isn't only hard on the calves—it doesn't help the health of the consumers, either. Scientists worry that this involuntary overmedication may produce allergies to important therapeutic drugs and foster the development of drug-resistant strains of harmful bacteria.



Quality veal doesn't have to be confinement-raised. In Great Britain, for instance, a new group-pen system, pioneered by its largest veal producer and being used by at least one other company, is rapidly gaining acceptance. Unlike the forced solitude of the single-stall crates, the new system (pictured above) allows several calves to live together in bedded pens where they can move about freely. Specially-designed machines allow the calves access to an iron-fortified milk-replacer whenever they want it.

The new system was developed in 1975, after the general public and government officials had expressed growing concern over confinement raising of veal calves. In testimony before a Parliamentary committee, a company official explained the move to a new system this way:

"The degree of limitation of behavior, and the abnormal state of physiological development are so extreme that the [confinement] practice is morally repugnant and professionally unethical. I believe

that our society should define some limits as to the extent to which it is prepared to subjugate animals to human interests."

The original impetus for the development of the group-pen system was a special commission appointed by the British government to look at the welfare of animals kept under intensive-confinement conditions.

Last summer, Ohio Congressman Ron Mottl introduced House Joint Resolution 305, which would establish a farm animal husbandry committee similar to Great Britain's. The committee, comprised of farmers, farm organization officials, consumers, animal welfare advocates, and scientific and medical experts, would study the problems related to intensive farm animal husbandry systems used in the U.S., including those used for veal calves, and would then report its recommendations back to the Congress. The establishment of such a committee would be the first step in improving the lives of veal calves and other animals that suffer under current confinement systems.

"One of the reasons I finally set my face against crated veal production was that I thought the number of restraints on natural behavior were just too great. The animal was prevented from ruminating. It was prevented from grooming itself, it was prevented from turning around, it was prevented from playing, jumping, exploring...."

—A spokesman for a British veal company that has abandoned the confinement system in favor of group pens (above). The U.S.'s largest veal company, Provimi, Inc., has recently begun testing the system.

This advertisement, which appeared in the December 17 edition of the New York Times, prompted the American Farm Bureau Federation to take out its own ad the next week to try to counter our claims.

What you can do

Public awareness is the key. We need to help unlock the stall doors for one million calves that will suffer to produce confinement veal this year. Here are some of the ways you can help.

- Use the enclosed card when you dine at restaurants that offer white veal to tell why you avoided that dish. You can send for more cards to use or to distribute. (See below for prices.)
- Support the Mottl bill. Write to your representative (c/o House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515) to urge him or her to cosponsor H.J.Res. 305 to establish a farm animal husbandry commission. Write your U.S. Senators (c/o Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510) urging them to introduce a similar bill in the Senate.
- Spread the word, using the material we've designed to help you become an effective part of this nationwide campaign. Our "Fact Sheet" provides up-to-date information and statistics on veal production; the "Action Sheet" shows how to make your concern known to industry and government representatives who can make a difference. Our sample action packet contains ten each of the fact and action sheets, and 20 "NO VEAL THIS MEAL" cards.
- Help support The HSUS's campaign to end the misery of milk-fed veal calves and other farm animals. Your tax-deductible contribution will help us to continue our public awareness campaign as well as our full-time staff work with federal agencies, Congress, and industry. Contributors of \$10 or more will automatically receive the sample action packet mentioned above. Remember, without your support, these animals will continue to suffer. Please use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to send your contribution today.

Additional copies of this report are available at 25¢ each.

Sample action packet available for \$2.

Additional "NO VEAL THIS MEAL CARDS" 50/\$1.00; 100/\$4.00; 500/\$6.00.

Other bulk prices available upon request.



2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037
(202) 452-1100

Before you choose veal...



Entrees	
1. Veal Piccata	
2. Veal Marsala	\$18.50
Scaloppine	\$18.00
Ordon Bleu	\$16.00
Billard	\$21.75
ncese	\$21.00
	\$18.50

think twice.

Think—Milk-fed or "white" veal... An expensive gourmet dish served in the best restaurants.

Think again—The real cost is to the calf. Did you know that from three or four days of age until slaughter at 16 weeks, most calves used to produce this costly product are totally confined in unbedded, wooden stalls, too small for the animals to take more than one step forward or back or even to turn around? They are kept virtually immobile their whole lives.

Think—White veal costs more than other types of veal because its "whiteness" supposedly makes it better.

Think again—Taste tests show the color of veal has little to do with flavor. White veal is white because calves are raised on liquid diets purposely deficient in iron to ensure that their flesh remains "fashionably" pale.

Think—Total confinement is supposedly the only way to produce milk-fed veal.

Think again—Less restrictive methods of raising calves are now used in Great Britain, where farmers report higher profits using the more humane group-pens than with traditional single-stalls.

Nearly one million calves are raised in confinement on iron deficient diets for white veal in the U.S. each year—to satisfy fashion and habit. The Humane Society of the United States is concerned about the humane treatment of all animals, including those reared for food. Help us in our work to change habits which cause inhumane treatment of animals... and *think twice before you choose veal.*

Yes, I would like to help HSUS in its work:

- ☐ I enclose my tax-deductible contribution of \$_____.
- ☐ Send me more information about The Humane Society of the United States' veal campaign.

Name _____

Address _____

Send to: **HSUS, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037**

This message paid for by a donation from Regina Bauer Frankenberg.

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